

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending. By this Amendment, the specification is amended.

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Objection to Drawings

Figs. 1 and 23 are objected to because reference numerals included in the figures are not mentioned in the specification. Accordingly, the specification has been amended to include the reference numerals mentioned in Figs. 1 and 23. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Hattori (U.S. Patent No. 6,034,718). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

In particular, Hattori does not disclose or suggest an optical fiber observing image processing apparatus including at least image capturing means having two or more different capturing modes regarding the capturing of the image data, and the capturing modes can automatically be switched in synchronous with or independently from progress of the image processing, as recited in independent claim 1.

The Office Action on page 4, lines 3-5, argues that Hattori discloses the above-noted feature in Col. 3, lines 6-35. However, it is respectfully submitted that such disclosure is not found in Hattori.

Instead, Hattori discloses in col. 3, lines 6-35, that the observation area is moved by moving the cameras with motors, thereby optical fibers can be observed. However, there is no disclosure related to having two or more different capturing modes regarding the capturing of the image data.

Further, Hattori in col. 7, starting at line 28, discloses that first, in a collective observation step, a reference surface P1 to be observed by the cameras is divided into two parts, thereby optical fibers on the reference surface P1 are divisionally observed by the two cameras from one direction. Second, in a local observation step, observation area of the reference surface to be observed by the cameras is arbitrarily selected, thereby it is observed by the two cameras from two directions. In this case, an image processing unit 7 composes and displays on monitor screens the images on the reference surface P1 captured by the two cameras.

However, Hattori does not disclose or suggest that capturing modes are switched between the collective observation step and the local observation step. Stated differently, changes in the area which is captured by the cameras occur solely from changes in location of the cameras by driving the motors.

Additionally, Hattori, does not describe specifically the way an image processing unit 7 composes and displays on monitor screens the images captured by the cameras.

However, considering that the images from a plurality of the cameras are composed in up-and-down arrangement, and that capturing modes of the cameras are not switched, the images in Hattori are composed and displayed on monitor screen without switching capturing modes of image.

Moreover, in Hattori, in col. 2 starting at line 13, there is no disclosure or suggestion such that capturing modes are switched in the way of capturing by cameras after optical composition by using a half mirror.

As such, Hattori does not disclose or suggest two or more different capturing modes regarding the capturing of the image data, and the capturing modes can automatically be switched in synchronous with or independently from progress of the image processing.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 2-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hattori in view of Hignette (U.S. Patent No. 5,191,393). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Hattori does not disclose or suggest an optical fiber observing image processing apparatus including at least image capturing means having two or more different capturing modes regarding the capturing of the image data, and the capturing modes can automatically be switched in synchronous with or independently from progress of the image processing. This feature is also recited in independent claims 2-6, and therefore, Hattori does not disclose or suggest this feature of independent claims 2-6.

Hignette is non-analogous art because Hignette pertains to a mask for semiconductor manufacturing or an integrated circuit. Hignette does not pertain to an optical fiber observing image processing apparatus. Therefore, Hignette may not be combined with Hattori to render the claims obvious.

However, even if Hignette was to be combined with Hattori, the combination would not render obvious the claimed invention.

Hignette does not use television cameras in performing its functions, but instead uses matrix cameras. A matrix camera is different from a television camera, for it is a specific two-dimensional sensor, which has the property of selecting a particular pixel by setting up two-dimensional coordinates from a computer. Therefore, connecting Hignette's matrix cameras 41 and 42 to a digitizer 43 cannot be used for display, resulting that it is necessary to provide another camera 48 for display on screen 49. See Fig. 2 of Hignette.

Stated differently, the combination of Hattori and Hignette does not disclose or suggest image capturing means having two or more different capturing modes regarding the capturing of the image data, and the capturing modes can automatically be switched in synchronous with or independently from progress of the image processing.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-6 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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